

Walking In The Way Of Jesus; **Action Steps of Obedience Creates Direction**

Considering the path from the tomb to the world

Acts 16:6-10 NKJV

⁶ Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. ⁷ After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit (the Spirit of Jesus) did not permit them. ⁸ So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. ⁹ And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." ¹⁰ Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.

I want us to consider something in the Acts of the Apprentices that is foundational for each and every one of us today. "Action Steps"

These new believers were active and moving in their faith and with their faith.

These men and women were serving, active, and moving. These men and women were not simply spectators, sitting on their hands.

Don't overlook the intentional and engaged approach of the men and women of the early church. These Christ followers were actively engaged in acts of service.

At MVC, we believe that any participation in service is a way to engage your faith. Service is how we activate our faith as an expression of love to God and others.

Let's take a moment to consider the reality of what we read in the scripture together.

The Holy Spirit and the Spirit of Jesus forbid them, did not allow them, or stopped them from going to Asia to proclaim the glad tidings.

Let's consider the commission of our Lord to His apprentice in Matthew 28:19-20 NIV

¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Acts 1-12 The Holy Spirit is sent to the church and confirms everything that Jesus Christ was teaching from His Father in heaven. This new perspective is proclaimed and reinforced over and over again, which is that Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection was accomplished for anyone around the world that would believe, both Jew and Gentile. All categories of people were included this redemption plan.

Now, these men are being told to not go. On a human level, with limited human understanding, we can see where there might be a struggle....."this makes no sense"!

We have been talking about very practical aspects of our faith and interaction with The Holy Spirit of the God family. Yieldingness of control and fear as we learn to trust. Spiritual sensitivity to what God says to us in all of His forms of communication.

Two basic forms of communication that we see in the Holy Scriptures:

- Most of us seem to be looking for some huge voice from heaven or as we have referred to it, “a movie moment”. Some larger than life, show stopping, or life altering event to get the attention of mortal men & women. Let’s just refer to this as **“A Strong Voice of the Spirit”**.
- Most of us need to learn that the Holy Spirit is most often a **“Still Small Voice”** in our lives. He, The Holy Spirit, can reinforce a truth or verse from Scripture. He can whisper a truth or a principle. He can use other people or situations to reinforce Father’s desire. He can remind us of the words of our Lord Jesus. **There are so many different ways that The Holy Spirit’s “Still Small Voice” can nudge or get our attention.**

Here is the more difficult portion of this discussion today.....our response to Him.

- Willful defiance
- Willful obedience

If we are going to learn to live with the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit then we must learn to trust and obey.

Not just when we want to.....

Not just when it makes sense to us.....

Not just when we feel like it.....

Not just when it meets or expectations or schedule

We must learn the basics of trusting and obeying.

This is NOT optional truth

Lyrics by John H. Sammis, Trust and Obey (1887)

1. **When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word,
What a glory He sheds on our way!
While we do His good will, He abides with us still,
And with all who will trust and obey.**
 - **Refrain:**
**Trust and obey, for there’s no other way
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.**
2. Not a shadow can rise, not a cloud in the skies,
But His smile quickly drives it away;
Not a doubt or a fear, not a sigh or a tear,
Can abide while we trust and obey.

3. Not a burden we bear, not a sorrow we share,
But our toil He doth richly repay;
Not a grief or a loss, not a frown or a cross,
But is blessed if we trust and obey.
4. **But we never can prove the delights of His love
Until all on the altar we lay;
For the favor He shows, for the joy He bestows,
Are for them who will trust and obey.**
5. **Then in fellowship sweet we will sit at His feet,
Or we'll walk by His side in the way;
What He says we will do, where He sends we will go;
Never fear, only trust and obey.**
 - o *Refrain:*
**Trust and obey, for there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.**

Got Questions.org “Grieving The Holy Spirit”

What does it mean to grieve the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30)?

Portions from the answer:

In an extended practical teaching on holy living (Ephesians 4:17—5:21), the apostle Paul tells believers, “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption” (Ephesians 4:30). His command not to grieve the Spirit falls under Paul’s initial instructions covering what *not* to do to cultivate holiness and walk in Christian purity.

Grieving the Holy Spirit is similar to “quenching” the Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19) in that both negatively impact the believer, the church, and the world. Quenching the Spirit speaks of stifling or suppressing the fire of God’s Spirit that burns within every believer. The Holy Spirit desires to express Himself in our actions and attitudes. When we do not allow God’s Spirit to be seen in our behavior, when we do what we know is wrong, we suppress or quench the Spirit. We do not allow the Spirit to reveal Himself as He wants to, with “love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” (Galatians 5:22–23).

Both quenching the Spirit and grieving the Spirit hinder a godly lifestyle. Both happen when we sin against God and follow our own worldly desires, living as we did before accepting Christ’s salvation. The only correct road to follow is the one that leads the believer closer to God and purity and farther away from the world and sin. Just as we do not like to be grieved, and just as we do not seek to quench what is good, we should not quench or grieve the Holy Spirit by refusing to follow His leading.

Please hear me this is a crucial, critical aspect of walking in redemption, growing in the grace of our Lord, and learning to walk in the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Obedience is the greatest path of receiving direction from God.

Isn't it amazing that most of us want to know; "God what should I do", "where should I go", or "how should I respond"?

Many of us want God's help in certain things.....we want His help and direction but many of us don't correlate obedience with direction.

Action Steps of Obedience Creates Direction

One last little nugget reminder.....**listening and obeying in the little things creates direction for being able to experience bigger things through listening and obeying.**

Luke 16:1-13

Being obedient in the little small things has everything to do with learning to be trusted with deeper, more important issues of faith.

Illustration: pennies on the ground

Why would God reveal greater, deeper truth to us when we refuse to do what He has already revealed to us?

Why do we want to learn more when we are not applying what God has already revealed to us?

May we be a family that is drawing close to Father God through Jesus by the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Let's just keep it simple by "Trusting and Obeying"